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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/506,425	02/17/2000	Sara Giordani	AM-3751	7521

32588 7590 12/04/2002

APPLIED MATERIALS, INC.
2881 SCOTT BLVD. M/S 2061
SANTA CLARA, CA 95050

EXAMINER

OLSEN, ALLAN W

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1763

DATE MAILED: 12/04/2002

11

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/506,425

Applicant(s)

GIORDANI, SARA

Examiner

Allan W. Olsen

Art Unit

1763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 July 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-10 and 12-53 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-22, 25 and 26 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 5-10, 12-16, 23, 24 and 27-34 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 35-53 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 29 July 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. .
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s).
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 36-41 and 48-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 36-39 and 48-51 include limitations pertaining to a second or third etch step which create an element of uncertainty which is carried into dependent claims 40, 41, 52 and 53 as well. For example, claim 36 recites "wherein said at least one additional step includes a second step which is performed using a process ...". Is this "second step" a second step within the at least one additional step or is it a second step of the overall process (i.e. the first step of the at least one additional step)?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 47-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,891,807 issued to Muller et al. (hereinafter, Muller).

Muller teaches reducing the pressure in a plasma chamber while etching a shaped cavity. The pressure is reduced preferably between 20% and 45%. See column 5, lines 30-43 and column 6, lines 8 and 33.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 35-37 and 42-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muller in view of U.S. Patent 5,182,234 issued to Meyer.

Muller teaches reducing the pressure in a plasma chamber while etching a shaped cavity. The pressure is reduced preferably between 20% and 45%. Muller teaches using etching silicon with an etchant comprising NF₃ and He. The etchant also includes HBr and O₂. Muller teaches that a sidewall passivation layer forms in the first stages of the etching process. As Muller is etching silicon with an oxygen containing plasma, the sidewall passivation would inherently comprise silicon dioxide. See: column 4, lines 29-49; column 5, lines 30-43; and column 6, lines 8 and 33.

Muller does not teach an etchant that comprises SF₆ and Ar.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to use an etchant that comprises SF₆ and Ar because Meyer teaches that the SF₆ and Ar are functional equivalents of Muller's NF₃ and He, respectively.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5-10, 12-16, 23, 24, 27-34 are allowed.

Claims 38-41 and 50-53 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

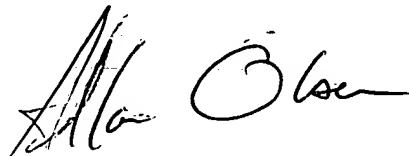
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Allan Olsen whose telephone number is 703-306-9075. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Greg Mills, can be reached on 703-308-1633.

The examiner's Right-Fax (direct to desktop) phone number is 703-872-9684. Alternatively, the general fax numbers for TC1700 are 703-872-9310 (non-after finals) and 703-872-9311(after-final).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

Allan Olsen, Ph.D.
November 23, 2002



Art. 1763